THE
FAIR SUICIDE:
BEING AN
EPISTLE
FROM A
Young LADY,
TO THE
Perſon who was the Cauſe of her DEATH.

The SECOND EDITION.

LONDON,

Printed for RICHARD WELLINGTON at the *Dolphin* and *Crown* without *Temple-Bar*. M.DCC.XXXIII.
(Price Six Pence.)

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TO Thee, O——, my greateſt, cruell'ſt Foe,
Cauſe of my Death, and Author of my Woe,
Theſe Lines from this unhappy Place I ſend,
Forſook by all, and left without a Friend.
All Day diſconſolate I pine and weep,
And the long Night can ſcarce afford me Sleep:
Sleep is a Stranger to a Soul oppreſs'd,
Nor ever harbours in an anxions Breaſt.
No more my Beauty now attracts a Gaze,
Sunk are mine Eyes, and loſt their wonted Rays?
No Mirth, or Joy, ſits ſmiling on my Face?
Each Charm is faded, fled is ev'ry Grace:
My Cheeks no more in roſy Bluſhes glow,
Nor down my Neck the Curling Ringlets flow:
But pale, and wan, and haggard I appear;
Nay, when I view myſelf, myſelf I fear.

Methinks, like Sprites, of whom I've often read,
The diſmal, lonely, ſilent Room I tread.
And, if beyond this reſtleſs Scene of Pain,
The Soul has Pow'r to viſit Earth again.
If likewiſe conſcious of paſt Wrongs ſhe knows,
The Cauſe and Author of her former Woes,
Then of Security no longer boaſt,
But dread the Vengeance of an injur'd Ghoſt.
Yet if Forgiveneſs thou, tho' late, woud'ſt crave,
And have my Shade reſt peaceful in the Grave;
Then future Kindneſs to my Parent ſhew,
Nor kill the Daughter, and the Mother too.
Thus I to thee the Means of Safety ſhow,
And loſt myſelf, wou'd ſtill adviſe my Foe.
Baſe as thou art, I not thy Death deſign,
No, rather live to be the Cauſe of mine.
For even now whilſt I theſe Lines indite
(Perhaps the lateſt that I e'er ſhall write)
My Mind's prepar'd to meet an inſtant Fate,
And Death does only for my Summons wait.
Yet ere I die——take, take this laſt Adieu,
To the vile World, and vileſt of it——You!

BUT whence this Doubt, this waving of the Mind?
Whence do I this fantaſtick Terror find?

When

When paſt the Grave ſure all Misfortunes ceaſe,
And the Soul reſts in leverlaſting Peace.
Or can there be Eternity of Woe?
Can Mis'ry follow to the Shades below?
If ſo—— why then theſe Croſſes here on Earth?
Theſe thouſand Ills attendant on our Birth?
Or ſay, ye learn'd, was't from the firſt deſign'd
That we alone ſhou'd endleſs Torture find?
Why were we then Lords o'er the reſt proclaim'd?
With Reaſon honour'd, and with Beauty fram'd?
Was't to no other Purpoſe but to know
Ourſelves ſuperior to the reſt in Woe?
Oh, then for ever let me ign'rant be,
And ſhare the Brute's unthinking Property!
The Brute, by Irreflection, happier made
Than We with all our boaſted Reaſon's Aid.
While ſprightly Blood his youthful Veins ſupplies,
Confirms his Strength, and lightens in his Eyes,
With Joy he feels th' invigorating Fire,
Sates ev'ry Wiſh, and gluts each fond Deſire;
To Nature's Calls allows a ſlacken'd Rein,
Aw'd by no Fear, no Dread of future Pain.
When worn with Age he lays him down to Reſt,
From all Anxiety for ever bleſt.

BUT ſpent in Toils, when Youth and Vigour's flown,
And Cares, ſucceeding Cares have preſs'd us down,
At Death's Approach no Comfort we can find
But Doubts on Doubts oppreſs the wav'ring Mind;
Still, ſtill we dread ſome diſmal, fatal Doom,
And ſtill anticipate new Woes to come;
Still look we forward with a fearful Eye,
Shock'd at the Thought of an Eternity.

IF otherwiſe—— how barb'rous to relate,
Fictitious Tortures of a future State?
Is't not enough to ſuffer Care and Strife?
To ſtruggle with the various Ills of Life?
To bear with Hunger, Infamy, and Dread,
And all the rugged Paths of Sorrow tread?
But muſt we likewiſe in the Realms below
Act o'er again the bitter Scene of Woe?
Unintermitting Woe and endleſs Pain,
Which when ten thouſand Years have roll'd in vain,
Still iterate, and ſtill begin again.

LOOK round the World, obſerve with curious Eyes,
What we count happy, what we chiefly prize.
Thoſe who're of Honours, Wealth, and Fame poſſeſs'd,
No doubt you'll grant unqueſtionably bleſs'd;

Yet

Yet ſay what Wealth, what Honours can inſure
Th' uncertain weak Poſſeſſion of an Hour?
Will Honours guard 'gainſt inward Grief or Rage?
Or Wealth the burning Fever's Heat aſſwage?
Will Fame 'gainſt envious Hate ſecure the Heart?
Or ſtop the Courſe of Death's unerring Dart?
No—— vain are Honours! Wealth and Fame are vain!
Slaves to our Paſſion! Traitors to our Pain!
Where then's this Phantom? this Ideal Shade?
This boaſted Happineſs by Fancy made?
The giddy, airy, vain Chimæra's fled,
And Woe ſubſtantial rears her gloomy Head.

THUS Bliſs at beſt is ever mixt with Strife,
And Care's the ſure Concomitant of Life,
How ſmall a Part whereof for Joy remains
Minutes of Pleaſures, but whole Years of Pains.

IS'T then a Crime to quit this wretched Life?
This Scene of Sorrow on a Stage of Strife?
Or are we forc'd to be with Grief oppreſs'd
When Nature's-ſelf points out the way to Reſt?
Say you, who Wiſdom beſt pretend to know,
Does Wiſdom teach us to prolong our Woe?
I thought 'twas prudent when with Ills oppreſs'd
T'avoid the greateſt and to chooſe the leaſt.

And which is greateſt, let yourſelves explain,
To bear a Moment's, or an Age's Pain?
But then the Sons of Sophiſtry reply,
We grant 'tis prudent from each Ill to fly;
But then 'tis Sin by one's own Hands to die.
Why then this fatal Gift did Heav'n beſtow
On wretched Mortals? to encreaſe their Woe?
Why give a Will to make them wiſh to bleed?
And Hands to execute the dreadful Deed?
Why ſeemingly make Right to jar with Right?
The Will to tempt them, yet the Sin t' affright?
Why drive them to Deſpair with Grief or Pain,
Give them a Pow'r, yet ſtill that Pow'r reſtrain,
Still bid them live, and hug the galling Chain?
Vain, idle Tale the ſilly World t'abuſe!
Which Cowards preach their Cowardice t' excuſe!
The noble Mind, the Philoſophick Soul,
No Fears can vanquiſh, no Reſtraints controul,
Calm and Serene the Paths of Fate ſhe tries,
And mounts, ſuperior, to her native Skies!

THUS when beneath th' Uſurper-*Ceſar*'s Sway
The *Roman* Greatneſs felt its firſt Decay;
The Gods themſelves the gen'rous Thought impreſs'd,
And all the Patriot rouz'd in *Cato*'s Breaſt.

T'aſſert

T'aſſert her Rites, he tempts the roaring Main,
And us'd to Danger, as inur'd to Pain,
Traverſes *Lybia*'s Waſte and *Africk*'s ſcorching Plain.
Long, long he ſtrove to prop the ſinking State,
And as 'gainſt *Ceſar*, ſo he ſtrove 'gainſt Fate:
Till with the vain, the glorious Labour tir'd,
He ſtab'd himſelf Immortal —— and expir'd!
Was this a Coward's Act? did this appear
A baſe inglorious, weak, and abject Fear?
No —— 'twas a gen'rous, godlike great Diſdain,
A Senſe ſuperior to the Vulgar Strain:
A noble Pride that fill'd his manly Soul,
That ſcorn'd Subjection, and abhor'd Controul!

Verſes occaſion'd by the foregoing Epiſtle.

AND is ſhe gone! and can there then reſide
In female Boſoms, ſuch heroick Pride?
Cou'd no vain Fears, no bugbear Thoughts controul
The firm Reſolves of her ſuperior Soul?
Oh! Glory of thy Sex! illuſtrious Maid!
Eternal Honours wait thy ſpotleſs Shade!
And to the Grave whene'er thy Corpſe is led,
Let not a Sigh be heard, a Tear be ſhed,
Nor Coward Grief demean the matchleſs Dead.
But let each Look, as thine when fix'd on Fate,
Be mildly awful, and ſeverely great.

Oh ſay who firſt inſpir'd the glorious Thought?
Who firſt thy Mind to Reſolution brought?
Or did ſuperior Reaſon urge the Deed
And bid Thee, Spite of Prejudice, proceed?
Bid Thee the idle Fears of Death controul
And 'gainſt imagin'd Terrors arm thy Soul?
Who taught Thee too in each harmonious Line
The force of Muſick and of Thought to join?
Who bad the Argument and Verſe to go
Both hand in hand, and yet ſo ſmoothly flow?
Sure Heav'n at firſt in framing Thee deſign'd
The faireſt Body, and the pureſt Mind;
A Mind that clearly ſaw thro' Nature's Laws,
And by th' Effect diſcern'd the certain Cauſe.
Made Thee the Bigot's empty Tales defy,
And taught Thee how and when 'twas fit to Die.
Oh noble Death! oh gen'rous great Deſign!
Worthy the Dictates of a Soul like thine!
Dictates to low ignoble Minds unknown
Who tamely bend beneath Oppreſſion's Frown:
Who bear with Infamy, with Want and Scorn,
Nor dare to kick againſt the rankling Thorn.
But for the Soul that's greatly, truly brave,
She's ne'er the Ridicule of Fool, or Knave,
Nor cringes to the Great, a fawning, flatt'ring Slave.

Nought that's diſhoneſt, or that's mean ſhe bears,
And nothing more, nay, nothing elſe ſhe fears.
When Life's propos'd, but on Conditions baſe,
Death ſhe prefers, and ſhuns the foul Diſgrace.
Perhaps you'll ſay that no ſuch noble Views,
But Pride alone 'tis makes her Life refuſe.
And if 't be ſo, oh let the glorious Pride,
When ſuch the Cauſe, myſelf, and mine betide!
For ſay, which moſt doth Praiſe and Honour claim
To live with Infamy, or die with Fame?
Peace, happy Maid! who knew as well to give
A Pattern how to die as how to live!
But for the Cauſe of thy untimely Fate,
Eternal Horrors on the Villain wait.
May Curſes light on his devoted Head
And Furies haunt his inauſpicious Bed!
Hear me then —— amidſt thy impious Joys,
To thee I call, but with no friendly Voice;
To tell thee how I hate thee, barb'rous Knave!
Thou ignominious, ſordid, ſelfiſh Slave!
Was't not enough under the ſpecious Name
Of Law and Juſtice all her Wealth to claim,
But wou'dſt thou likewiſe blaſt her Virgin Fame.
How cou'dſt thou dare thy Proffers vile to make,
Or hope to win a Heart thou'dſt ſtrove to break?

How cou'dſt thou, Miſcreant, e'er preſume t' obtain
What Kings might wiſh for, and might wiſh in vain?
And was it thus thou baſely did'ſt deſign
To make her Fortune, and her Perſon thine?
Miſtaken Knave! her Wealth, her leaſt Deſert,
By vile Deceit thou'ſt gain'd, and fraudful Art.
But for herſelf (a Gem ſo wondrous fair
The greateſt Monarchs might be proud to wear)
With what falſe Hopes, what Expectations fraught
Dar'ſt thou to harbour ſuch an impious Thought?
A Thought which in the greateſt wou'd be vain,
But in a Wretch, like thee, was moſt profane.
Had'ſt thou not been beneath her Care or Hate,
Nay ev'n beneath Contempt, thou'dſt met thy Fate.
Sh'ad call'd down inſtant Vengeance from the Skies,
Or ſtruck thee dead with Light'ning from her Eyes.
So when the gath'ring Clouds in black Array
The Skies envelop, and exclude the Day,
The burſting Thunder with impetuous Stroke
Tears the tall Pine, and ſplits the ſturdy Oak,
Whilſt the vile Shrub ſecurely plays below,
Nor feels the Shock of the tremendous Blow.

FINIS.